s. No	Description 2l	Year 300-01	Year 2001-02	Year 2002-03
17.	Aerated waters and soft drinks (Chapter 21) Specialized packaging for food processing industries (Chapter 48, 76)	40%	32%	32%*"
18.		16%	16%	16%
19	Total Revenue collected (Rs. crore)	2049	1688	1881

*Duty on sugar confectionery excluding white chocolate was reduced to 8% *w.e.f.* March, 2003.

"Duty on Biscuits was reduced to 8% *w.e.f.* March, 2003.

***Duty on aerated waters and soft drinks was reduced to 24% *w.e.f.* March, 2003.

Items, other than mentioned above, are in general exempt from excise duty.

IRDA's delegation to United States

*317. SHRIMATI BIMBARAIKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether top functionaries of Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority are on a fact-finding mission to the United States; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard including the areas of interest of the mission.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A team consisting of Chairman, two wholetime Members, an Executive Director of IRDAand Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Finance recently visited United States of America and Canada to study the regulations of insurance market alongw: in the effectiveness of mechanisms to protect the interests of policyholders in these countries, also their relevance and applicability in India.

Improvement of Guwahati Airport

*318. SHRI ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to refer to Unstarred Question 1 given in the Rajya Sabha on 26th February, 2002 and state: